

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT O 00644 192044Z

63

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NIC-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05

EUR-12 CU-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 COME-00 EB-07

LAB-04 SIL-01 USIE-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 /085 W

----- 128518

O R 192030Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7542

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

USDAO/CARACAS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PORT OF SPAIN 0644

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, ELAB, PINS, TD

SUBJ: LABOR/POLITICAL CRISIS--1500 STATUS REPORT

MARCH 19

REF: POS 638 AND PREVIOUS

1. THE DEMONSTRATORS WHO HAD GATHERED TODAY ON THE QUEEN'S PARK SAVANNAH NEAR THE EMBASSY PEACEFULLY ABANDONED THEIR ATTEMPT TO DEMONSTRATE IN FRON OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE AT WHITEHALL LATE IN THE MORNING WHEN CONFRONTED WITH MOUNTED POLICE AND RIOT POLICE. THE GROUP, COMPOSED LARGELY OF RURAL EAST INDIANS, REASSEMBLED IN THE AFTERNOON IN WOODFORD SQUARE IN DOWNTOWN PORT OF SPAIN WITHOUT ANY DISCERNIBLE LEADERSHIP. ACCORDING TO POLICE SOURCES, THE DEMONSTRATORS HAVE REQUESTED AND RECEIVED PERMISSION TO HOLD A MEETING AT WOODFORD SQAURE AT 4 P.M. THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IDENTITY OF THE SPEAKERS WHO WILL ADDRESS THE

MEETING IS NOT KNOWN.

2. GEORGE WEEKES, FRESHLY RELEASED FROM JAIL ON TT\$700 BOND AND HIS PROMISE NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN ANOTHER MARCH BEFORE HIS APPEARANCE IN COURT ON FRIDAY, CALLED AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE OWTU EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TO MAP THE UNION'S STRATEGY. HE WAS JOINED AT THE OWTU HEADQUARTERS BY ALL TRINIDAD PRESIDENT BASDEO PANDAY WHO ADDRESSED A CROWD OUTSIDE THE UNION'S HEADQUARTERS IN SAN FERNANDO.

3. THIS AFTERNOON THE POLICE CALLED ON THE PUBLIC TO REMAIN CALM AND TO GO ABOUT BUSINESS NORMALLY. THE SITUATION, THEY SAID, WAS COMPLETELY UNDER CONTROL. ELECTRIC POWER WAS RESTORED TO THE EMBASSY THIS AFTERNOON, BUT MANY PARTS OF THE CITY ARE STILL WITHOUT ELECTRICITY. LOAD SHEDDING IS CONTINUING ALTHOUGH ELECTRICITY COMMISSION IS ISSUING OPTIMISTIC STATEMENTS.

4. STUDENTS AT THE ST. AUGUSTINE CAMPUS OF THE UNIVERISTY OF THE WEST INDIES HAVE BEEN CALLED TO A MEETING BY THE RADICALLY-ORIENTED WEST INDIES GROUP OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS (WIGUT) AT 5 P.M. TODAY. THE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS ARE NOT, HOWEVER, EXPECTED TO HAVE ANY SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE PRESENT SITUATION.

5. AS THE DAY WANES, A STALEMATE OF SORTS HAS DEVELOPED AS THE UNIONS REGROUP. MEANWHILE GASOLINE, POWER AND WATER SHORTAGES AS WELL AS THE UNSETTLED MOOD HAVE SLOWED THE PACE OF THE COUNTRY'S PULSE. MANY SCHOOLS AND STORES CLOSED EARLY TODAY DESPITE BROADCAST ANNOUNCEMENTS THAT ALL WAS WELL.
MILLER

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